

Joseph Dobell

PRETENDED CALVINISM:

O R,

REAL ANTINOMIANISM.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

PRETENDED CALVINISM:

O. L.

REAL AND TRUE CALVINISM:



PRICE ONE SHILLING

4372 f35
W.
4

A
B L O W
AT THE ROOT OF
PRETENDED CALVINISM;
O R,
REAL ANTINOMIANISM.
BEING
A DEFENCE OF FREE THOUGHTS,
ON THE
EXTENT OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST,
AND
THE DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION.
FROM
THE OBJECTIONS OF AN ANONYMOUS
REMARKER.

In several LETTERS to a Friend.

BY JOHN HAMPSON

By Manifestation of the Truth, commending ourselves to
"every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God."

ST. PAUL.

"Nothing extenuate; nor set down aught in Malice."

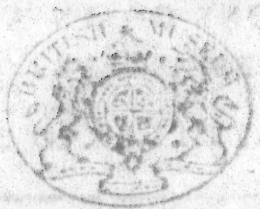
TUNBRIDGE-WELLS:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY JASPER SPRANGE,
(FOR THE AUTHOR)

And may be had of J. JOHNSON, *St. Paul's-Church
Yard*; and of T. SCOLLIĆK, *City-Road, London*.

W O B
AT THE FOOT OF
PRESENTED CALVINISM
OF
REAL ANTI-NOMIANISM

A REFERENCE OF LARGE THOUGHTS
TO THE
THE OBJECTIVE OF REFORMATION
THE DETECTION OF



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELISTS
NEW YORK
PUBLISHED BY THE
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELISTS
NEW YORK
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELISTS
NEW YORK
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELISTS
NEW YORK

TO THE
WORTHY GENTLEMEN
TRUSTEES
OF THE
DISSENTING-CHAPEL AT TUNBRIDGE-WELLS;
AND OF THE
FREE-SCHOOL, AT SOUTHBOROUGH;
TOGETHER WITH HIS MUCH RESPECTED
HEARERS IN THAT NEIGHBOURHOOD;
AND TO HIS
NUMEROUS FRIENDS IN VARIOUS PARTS:

THESE LETTERS,
THE WORK OF A FEW LEISURE HOURS,
BORROWED FROM THE SCHOOL AND PULPIT;

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,
(In the Cause of Truth, and Religious Liberty)

JOHN HAMPSON.

Ready for the Press, the Second Part of

A

B L O W

AT THE ROOT OF

Pretended Calvinism :

OR,

Real Antinomianism.

IN SEVERAL LETTERS

TO THE

Pretended Calvinist Ministers.

BY JOHN HAMPSON.

“ By Manifestation of the Truth, commending ourselves to
“ every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God.”

ST. PAUL.

“ Nothing extenuate ; or set down aught in Malice.”

“ This Spirit of making Profelytes to the Opinions and
Doctrines of Men, under a Notion of converting them to
Truth, being set at Work by human Pride, is very restless :
like it's Father it goeth about seeking whom it may devour---
itself may be looked upon as the Parent of all Sectarian Zeal.”

REV. MR. MADAN.

✂ The SECOND PART consists of a Confirmation of
Conditional Salvation and Destruction, from the
New Testament : And *serious Remonstrances*
with the *Pretended Calvinist Ministers*, upon
their most distinguishing Doctrines.

S I R,

THE judicious Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, says:—A source of errors on the article of christian morality, is a *pretended* Calvinism; which, under the shew of attributing all to grace, destroys the freedom of human actions, reduces Man to a mere machine, and runs into the spring whence it first proceeded—the Stoical Fatalism. I call this, says he, *pretended* Calvinism, because it was not the system of that great Man; nor is it the system of the Holy Scriptures, which never so states the doctrine of the Fall, as to exculpate Sinners; nor ever so speaks of divine Influence, as to annihilate moral Agency*.

B

Tunbridge

* Claud's Essay on the Composition of a Sermon, Vol. I. page 362.—Vide Note.

Tunbridge-Wells, and its neighbourhood, hath been infested of late years, with several of these *pretended* Calvinist Ministers. It is said, that one of them, in order to comfort the Elect, told them—“That God had pardoned all their sins past, present and to come. To exemplify my meaning,” says he, “you got drunk yesterday; I tell you, he hath forgiven it: you get drunk to-day; he hath forgiven that too: you get drunk to-morrow; well, it is freely and for ever forgiven, for Christ’s sake!”

Such preaching as this, and particularly calling names from the pulpit, hath been attended with bad consequences. Those amongst their hearers, who were most pious and moderate, lamented the rapid progress of a narrow censorious Spirit; for ever applying some *opprobrious* *ISM* or other, to their more moderate opposers. Either it was *Armenianism*, or it was *Arianism*,
or

or *Pelagianism*, or *Socinianism*; or some other *ISM*; it made little matter what, as they were not over nice at distinguishing!

These differences, and the opposition of a great majority of the Congregation to one of these gentlemen, made it necessary for him to decamp: and though he returned, supported by very respectable authority, he was obliged (it is to be hoped, finally) to withdraw; and hold up his *Scarcrowisms* to fright children else where.

These gentlemen, claim to themselves the name of Orthodox; and plentifully bestow that of Heretic, upon those who differ from their dogmas: Devotion towards God; Justice, Mercy, and Charity towards Men; together with a due subjection of their passions and appetites to the laws of Reason, Conscience, and Scripture, cannot exculpate them

from the charge. They call themselves *Gospel Ministers!* and those who dare think for themselves, and call no man Father upon earth, are (to use their own vulgar comparison) “as ignorant of the Gospel as a horse.”

Hence, Ministers of other denominations, in the neighbourhood, have found themselves under a necessity to defend themselves, and their people: This hath generally been done by scripturally stating, and proving the doctrines they preach; the practices they recommend; and the liberties they claim:—carefully distinguishing between men and measures. Men were rarely, very rarely, if at all opposed; except when they arrogated (directly or indirectly) to themselves, a Liberty they did not grant to others; and, in that case, they were opposed—as unjust Usurpers of other people’s Rights.

The

The Author of the "Free Thoughts upon the Extent of the Death of Christ, and the Doctrine of Reprobation;"—having seen the bad effects of Unconditional Reprobation, and being persuaded of the immense damage it may do in the world: viz. "Some may indulge themselves in sin, and so fatally deceive themselves; while others may suppose they are Reprobates; and knowing that on such a supposition all means are useless, sit down in despair and finally perish*."

I say, on this conviction, the Author of the Free Thoughts conceived the benevolent design of aiming a blow at the root of this pernicious system.—His friends, who saw it in Manuscript, judged it admirably calculated, either to oblige them to disown Reprobation—the corner-stone in their building; or, throw off the mask, come forth, and avow themselves its defenders. This conduct

* Free Thoughts, pages 64, 65.

conduct would have been open, manly, and generous.

Instead of proceeding in this candid, ingenuous manner, they launched out into open abuse from the pulpit, and warned their hearers to “beware of Controversy. Controversy was the most dangerous thing in the world!—It was carnal reasoning!—There were two-penny Pamphlets, and six-penny Pamphlets; but they only served to put us in mind of the insects which flew buzzing about, and were generated out of the mud of the Nile.” To make this beautiful comparison compleat, it should be remembered—that those insects were the production of Divine Wisdom, and Power: an origin impliedly given to the Free Thoughts, by this comparison, which the Author’s modesty never dreamed of.

This conduct, my good Friend, you will deem ridiculous:—and indeed so it

it is; and justly merits to be held up as contemptable. Behold then, a Rev. Divine gracing a pulpit which hath been more sacredly devoted to defamation, abuse, and ill-natured Controversy; *i. e.* calling names: than any—I add, than all the pulpits in the neighbourhood. I say, behold this Rev. Divine, making complaints against the dreadful effects of Controversy! charging his hearers not to read Controversy! It puts us strongly in mind of a swaggering Bravado, who challenges his harmless peaceable neighbour to fight; loads him with abuse; calls him names; strikes him; and, when by such methods he has made it necessary for him to defend himself, and repel force by force, meanly skulks out of the way; and, with all the gravity in the world, vociferates to his neighbours, to beware of fighting! Fighting is the worst thing in the world! O this dreadful heresy of fighting!

How,

How, says an impartial spectator, do you declaim against fighting, who but just now loaded your neighbour with abuse, and struck him into the bargain? Go, hide yourself for shame, and learn to behave peaceably in future. You laugh, my friend, and well you may, at this ridiculous conduct:—but I beg leave to hold up the subject in another point of view; and I am much mistaken if it do not excite other kind of emotions.

Controversy, when conducted in this abusive manner, is granted to be a very bad thing:—but Controversy, when managed with temper, a just regard for truth, and the sacred rights and best interests of our fellow Christians; is an exceeding useful method of detecting our own errors, finding out truth, and establishing us therein. *Paul disputed daily in the school of Tyrannus**.

In

* Acts xix.—9.

In the case before us, there is every reason to believe—that beware of Controversy;—read no Controversy;—do not dispute;——means just the same thing, as—read no Controversy but what we recommend!—do not dispute but with those who are unable to defend!—Beware of Controversy, save from our pulpit! Consider—are not we your ministers?—are not we orthodox?—are not the Arminians heretics?—is it not our business to think and judge for you? Commit yourselves entirely to our direction, and fear no consequences: we will bear you harmless at last! When Popery was predominant in this country, this method, however wicked and unjust, prevailed; but thank God! the sacred rights of conscience are better understood: these gentlemen were born two or three hundred years too late*.

C

I am

* “A low servile soul,” says Mr. Robinson, “habituated not to think for itself, but to be led by a guide, is prepared for the commission of any crime; or the belief of any absurdity, that a mercenary guide

I am justified in these conclusions by another of these gentlemen:—He met with the Free Thoughts; if I have not misunderstood my informer, they were another persons property: he cast them into the fire, and burned them! Is it hard judging, to conclude—that this
man

may find convenient to enjoin. No men teach the depravity, the extreme and excessive depravity of human nature with a better grace than these men.—Were I disposed to sink a soul into the lowest degree of wretchedness, either as a citizen of the world, or as a member of the church, I would inculcate with all my might a spirit of servility; and that would answer my end better than any other method in the world. I would not shock a man with the sounds of perjury and blasphemy, impiety to GOD, and injustice to men:—but I would gently inform him—that he was a poor depraved foolish creature, not able to judge between good and evil; truth and error; and that he would discover great arrogance, if he thought otherwise: But that I was a wise and sacred man, wishing well to his soul; and that believing what I said to be true, and by doing what I directed to be done,—he would be pious, and safe and happy.—There is therefore no virtue—but a great fund of iniquity—in implicit faith.” ROBINSON’S SERMONS, page 200.

man sets up for lording it over conscience? or, had he been armed with penal laws, would he not have confuted the Author of the Free Thoughts with a vengeance?

Another of these gentlemen accidentally called at an house where the Author of the Free Thoughts was; and the following conversation took place.—
*“ Are you the Author of the FREE THOUGHTS?” “ I am.” “ If they be true, I must be lost.” “ They may be true, notwithstanding that; but of what do you disapprove in them?” “ Of the whole!” “ Please to mention particulars.” “ You deny that Christ has paid the proper debt?” “ I do:—can you prove it?” “ Yes: Christ kept the law, and died on the cross.” “ True; but how do you prove he paid the proper debt?” “ He did, or I must be lost!”—
 “ This is no proof: pray what is the proper debt?” *“ The proper debt, is to*
 C 2 *fulfill**

fulfill the preceptive part of the law; and suffer the penalty due to the breach of it."

"Nay, Sir, the law does not require both obedience and punishment; the latter is substituted on supposition of failure in the first. Let me illustrate your supposition by a similitude:— I owe you £100.—I am incapable of discharging the debt: a friend of mine pays you the utmost farthing:— You say, you will forgive me. I ask, with astonishment, what do you mean? I owe you nothing; if the proper debt be discharged, there can be no forgiveness! The application is easy." He then asked, "*What is the cause of man's misery?*" "Unbelief." "Nay," said he, "*Man is condemned because he has not kept the law.*" "The scriptures assert, that man is condemned because he hath not believed." "You do not understand." "Then I apply to you for instruction." "*I say, that unbelief is not the cause.*" "Well, Sir, if you will assert this, in direct opposition to Christ
and

and his Apostles, the dispute between us is at an end.

A private professor of this stamp, who had been hearing the Author of the Free Thoughts preach a practical Sermon, when he came out exclaimed:—*“ This is no Gospel! This is Salvation by Works! I do not approve of such preaching.”* “ True Joe:” said a gentleman, who stood by;—“ for then you would not have stole my turneps.”

But two things, you say, surprize you: You cannot account for it, that a pamphlet written with so much good nature; with so just a regard for that equal religious liberty which every man hath a right to claim, and exercise in this country; with that reverence for God, and that constant appeal to the scriptures: you say, you cannot account for it how such a pamphlet should have met with so much opposition, so irreligi-
gioussly

giouſly carried on ; and yet, that none of theſe mighty men of valour ſhould have courage ſufficient, to attack it fairly and openly.

The Author of the Free Thoughts was convinced, that the pretended Calviniſts artfully kept back the cloven foot of Reprobation, for fear it ſhould be an objection to other parts of their ſyſtem. He thought he ſhould act the part of friend to mankind, could he pull off the mask. It occured to him, that if the brat was hurt, they would be tempted to come to its aſſiſtance. The plan ſucceeded, to his utmoſt wiſhes !—They reprobated the pamphlet !—They guarded their hearers againſt reading it !—They unchriſtianed the Author !—Why all this outcry, if they are not faſt friends to abſolute Reprobation ? who hath hurt you, that you ſhould make ſuch an uproar ? Their conduct is written in their actions ; and cannot be

be better translated than in the language of Micah :——*Ye have taken away my gods; and sayest thou, what aileth thee*?*

I congratulate you, Sir, upon our Friend's success: let us not forget the mask, when they again hold forth on Election and Perseverance absolute; no, though they should add, universal offers of Free-Grace; still, let us remember, that it is——

“ Free grace, for all, divinely free :

“ For us, thou Reprobate, but not for thee !”

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

in the Gospel,

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 16, 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

* Judges xviii.—24.

THE FIRST PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

I. THE REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
FROM 1625 TO 1649
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE SECOND PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE THIRD PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE FOURTH PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE FIFTH PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE SIXTH PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

THE SEVENTH PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST
BY JOHN HALLAM

LETTER II.

SIR,

IN my former Letter, I gave you a state of Facts, relative to the publication of the Free Thoughts, and the outcry that was raised against them, and the Author. In return, you send me a paper of Remarks upon them, by an anonymous Author; and wish me to give you my sentiments upon it. I take up my pen in order to gratify you; and only wish you to hold an even scale upon the Remarker on one side;—and the Free Thoughts, and my Remarks upon the Remarker, on the other.—The Remarker introduceth his Remarks in the following manner:

D

“ DEAR

“DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for the Pamphlet you sent me, entitled,—*Free Thoughts on the Extent of Christ's Death; and the Doctrine of Reprobation, &c.* And in compliance with your request, I took the first leisure hour to peep into it, and present you with a few thoughts in reference thereto. Whether the Author was ashamed to put his name to it or not, I cannot say.”

You see, the Remarker sets off with a latent insinuation, which is calculated to prepossess his Readers against the Author of the *Free Thoughts*, as if “*he was ashamed to put his name to them.*”

As I am of counsel for the prisoner, I beg leave to state the fact; and an impartial hearing from the Court. The Author is not officious: he considered the

the public as an awful and respectable tribunal. He doth not say—with your leave; or without your leave; but by your leave, gentlemen:—and he humbly hopes, that none will be offended with him, because he pursues his way without telling his name. The Author has his friends; but he doth not wish their partiality in his favor, should bias their judgment. He knows he has his enemies; and he did not wish the child to be punished for the father's faults!

But why do I spend my time in the defence of a conduct, the Remarker will go near to acquit him in? He *concedes*, — “ *that the Author of the Free Thoughts appears to be a man of zeal, industry, and ingenuity.*” Have then, men of zeal, industry, and ingenuity any sufficient reasons for being ashamed of their names? Hear this, and rejoice, ye idle, luke-warm, sons of dulness!—You may carry your names in large

letters on your foreheads ! I take my leave of this objection, by suggesting a hint to the Remarker, viz. That if nothing of greater weight than I have yet seen, come against the Free Thoughts, the Author will be under a strong temptation to put his name to a second Edition !

But the Remarker observes, "*That the Author of the Free Thoughts has industriously collected most of the old stale Arminian arguments from other authors; and the scriptures which they have took notice of, with the corrupt glosses on them against the poor despised Calvinists.— And these he has published as his own, with some few variations and abridgements: So that though his Pamphlet be new, his arguments and expositions on the texts of Scripture, are not so. All which have been answered again, and again; and therefore need no direct formal answer.*"

Here,

Here, the Remarker pays his tribute of applause, to the industry of the Author of the Free Thoughts; but, as this compliment is at the expence of his honesty, he being no more (according to the Remarker) than a meer Copyist! and Plagiarist! he will not, perhaps, think himself under any considerable obligations to the Remarker for his compliment. Let me, then, pay my compliment too, to the Remarker, upon his wonderful celerity in getting rid of all the rational and scriptural arguments in the Free Thoughts, at one stroke!—
“ They have all been answered again, and again; and therefore need no formal answer.”

Most assuredly, he has employed his *“leisure hour of peeping”* to admirable purpose, if this is the case! As I cannot boast of being such a Jehu driver as the Remarker, he must pardon me if I do something more than take a leisure
 hour

hour to peep into it! If "*all his arguments and expositions on the texts of Scripture have been answered again, and again;*" how comes it that there are "*some few variations?*"—"These, he has published as his own, with some few variations!"—"Those *variations are his own too!* and they are new! and consequently—*all his arguments and expositions of Scripture have not been answered,*

Believe me, my dear Friend, if this is the consequence of his *peeping*, the Author of the Free Thoughts is greatly obliged to him;—as he may possibly come up with him yet, before the end of his journey!

When we consider that this Controversy hath exercised the pens of hundreds, for upwards of thirteen hundred years; the very utmost that can reasonably be expected from any modern
writer

writer upon the subject is, to give it novelty, by his manner of treating it.

The Author of the Free Thoughts lays claim to the candor of the Public, by the great deference he pays to its authority;—by his easy, clear, concise way of handling the subject;—and by the very great attention he constantly shews to the attributes of GOD, the holy Scriptures, the nature and reason of things, and the sacred rights and liberties of mankind.

To have done with this objection:—
If the Remarker wishes to avoid the character of a slanderer, and a friend to implicit faith and blind obedience;—
If he wishes to appear the man of reading, reflection and judgment;—if he wishes to appear the open, generous impartial searcher after truth, instead of just *peeping* into an Author he animadverts upon; let him sit down coolly,
and

and give us the chapter and verse of his authorities. Let him prove to us,—that his arguments are not new; nor his own: that Arminian glosses are corrupt glosses;—and finally, that he has not contradicted himself; and given us reason for putting him upon this task!—He will then be convinced,—That to write Controversy well, something more is required than *merely to peep into a Pamphlet!*

The Remarker says;—“ *I observe too, that like other Arminian authors, he has represented the Calvinist principles in a most shocking and false light: as if they made God the Author of all sin; and gave countenance to all manner of wickedness! Principles,*” says he, “ *that I myself, and all the Calvinists I have ever been intimate with, detest and abhor.—But such a representation of our principles, may, perhaps, answer a better end with the Arminians, than solid arguments: as it tends to FRIGHTEN weak,*
and

and well-meaning people ;—to prejudice their minds against the truth, and to prevent their attendance upon the pure Gospel of Christ."

As the Author of Free Thoughts hath never once mentioned the Calvinists in all his Pamphlet ;—as he has brought all his strength to bear against things, not persons ;—against absolute Reprobation ;—and more especially, as there is "*a pretended Calvinism, which, under shew of attributing all to Grace, destroys the freedom of human actions—reduces Man to a mere machine—and runs into the spring whence it first proceeded,—the Stoical Fatalism.*" I say, these things attended to, it was at the Remarkers's option whether he would apply it to himself and his friends, or no : If he was conscious that himself, and his friends, were the men who teach—
" That G O D, before the foundation of the world, chose, from among mankind, a certain number of persons by name, and

E

that

that this number is so determinate, that they can neither be augmented nor diminished;—that for these persons, and these only, Christ died;—and, of consequence, they must be saved:—That they are therefore termed Elect.” If he really knew, that he, and his friends, were fairly described as those who teach—“*That the rest of mankind were passed by, or left in the ruins of fallen nature;—and, as Christ did not die for them, they must perish!*” I say, if he knew this, he acted the part of a generous friendly man, to the pretended Calvinists at Tunbridge-Wells, and it's Environs; for whose meridian the Free Thoughts were calculated, in so generously stepping forth to their assistance. The query is, whether, by acting this part, he has not bound himself to the defence of these obnoxious principles: To give him his due, he seems to think so;—but complains of charging Calvinian principles with wickedness. Let us see
whether

whether these consequences are not fairly drawn from those principles.

“ G O D chose the Elect by name :— their number was so certain and determined, that it can neither be augmented or diminished : that G O D passed by the rest of mankind, left them in the ruins of fallen nature ; and, as Christ did not die for them, they must perish !” This, I call the end of predestination :——but such as is the end, such must be the means :—if the end be absolute, the means must be absolute also.

I therefore query,—Did not he who fixed the end, fix the means ? in other words, Could any of the Elect finally perish ? No. Why, why could they not perish ? Because G O D had absolutely fixed both the end, and means of their Salvation. Could any of the Reprobates be saved ? No. Why could they not be saved ? Because G O D

had fixed both the end and the means of their Damnation! They must sin, that they might perish!

Such, my dear Friend, I take to be the language of this horrible decree, which they have fathered upon the lovely, and loving *Father of mercies*; whom the Scriptures represent—as *loving to every man!* and *whose mercies are over all his works!* And such is *their Doctrine*, if this reasoning is conclusive.—I solemnly declare, I can see no defect in it:—if the Remarker does, I make no doubt but his own credit, and that of his cause, will operate as a powerful stimulus to detect it.

Mean time, all that he says about
*“such a representation of their principles
 answering a better end with the Arminians
 than solid argument, as it tends to frighten
 weak, well-meaning people; to prejudice
 their minds against the truth; and to
 prevent*

prevent their attendance on the pure Gospel of Christ ;" is mere flourish!—pure parade! it is, in reality, what Logicians call—begging the question. Doubtless, we must know, as who doth not know, that they, *exclusively*, have the sacred deposit of *the truth!* That they, and they only, preach "*the pure Gospel of Christ!*" In a word: "*That they are the men, and wisdom shall die with them!*" Some wayward spirits might be infidel enough to question, whether she will not be alive when they are dead and buried! but let them take care of themselves! let them stand clear of their indignation!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

LETTER

LETTER III.

S I R,

TH E Remarker has a drawback, upon the tribute of praise he has offered at the shrine of the Author's ingenuity. "This (ingenuity) appears," says he, "*in the scperate columns he has invented, and the happy pairs he has placed in them, in order to reconcile Grace and Duty together; and make them joint causes of man's Salvation.*"

"This is ingenuity indeed! Such ingenuity as neither Christ, nor any of his Apostles ever attained to. For though
they

they preached free Salvation by Grace ; and Duty, as the certain fruit and effect of receiving it : Yet, they never dreamed of blending Grace and Duty together ; or of making them joint causes of man's Salvation."

When, in a book of consequence, any thing appears obscure ; or different parts seem to contradict each other ;—sensible, friendly men to the Author and his book, will employ their critical abilities to elucidate it, bring seeming contradictions together, and use every honest art to reconcile them ; and by this means shew their respect to the Author, and his work, and so contribute their mite to spread it's usefulness.

In this manner the friends of religion have conducted themselves with respect to the Holy Scriptures. And amongst others, the Author of the Free Thoughts has cast his mite into the treasury, and for which, I think the Public are greatly obliged

obliged to him. Coolly review, with me, the following contrast, transcribed from *Free Thoughts*, page 60; and alluded to as the obnoxious passage animadverted upon by the Remarker;—and tell me if it is not a beautiful one!

<i>G R A C E.</i>	<i>D U T Y.</i>
Salvation is of the Lord*.	Work out your own Salvation*.
It is not of him that willeth†.	Whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely†.
It is not of him that runneth‡.	So run that you may obtain‡.
Christ is exalted to give Repentance§.	God commandeth all men to repent§.
Unto you it is given to believe .	He that believeth not shall be damned .
From all your Filthiness I will cleanse you¶.	Having these Promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all Filthiness¶.
Not of Works, lest any man should boast**.	Christ shall reward every Man according to his Works**.

* Jonah ii. 9. † Rom. ix. 16

‡ Rom. ix. 16. § Acts v. 31.

|| Phil i. 29. ¶ Ezek xxxvi 25.

** Ephesians ii. 9.

* Phil. ii. 12. † Rev. xx 17.

‡ 1 Cor ix 24. § Acts xvii 30.

|| Mar. xvi 16. ¶ 2 Cor vii 1.

** Matthew xvi. 27.

In this manner, I have said, the friends to God and Religion have conducted themselves with respect to the Holy Scriptures; and cited what appears to me, a striking illustration of the remark, from the obnoxious Pamphlet, and Passage so ludicrously opposed by the Remarker.

Bigots take another method:—Full of a system, to which they have plighted their Faith, they take up the book, and examine it by their system:—if it bears hard upon any part of it, and be of human composition, they usually decry the whole, and defame the Author!—If a part of *the Bible* be cited, as bearing hard upon them, they cite passages in opposition, without any attempt to reconcile them; and so leave an open door to the objections of infidels against the whole! Where the Bible is not friendly to their system, it may shift for itself!

In

In a manner nearly analagous to this, the Remarker conducts himself with respect to the fore-cited passage from the Free Thoughts. He attempts ludicrous humour upon the "*happy Pairs*;" and then roundly affirms:—"This is such ingenuity, as neither Christ, nor any of his Apostles, ever attained to: they never dreamed of blending Grace and Duty together; or of making them joint causes of man's Salvation."

Had a priest of the Romish communion affirmed this, three or four hundred years ago, to his unlearned hearers or readers, they would have been obliged to pay implicit faith to the ghostly Father, or take the consequence! Thank God the tables are turned!

I take up my Bible, and read:—"Thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things*." "*Inasmuch* as ye have done these

F 2

* Matt. xxv.—21. &c.

these things unto my brethren, ye have done it unto me. These shall go into life eternal*." "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee in the hour of temptation†." "These are they that came out of great tribulation——*therefore* are they before the throne‡." "Because I called and ye refused——*therefore* I will laugh at your calamity§."

As I have my doubts whether the Remarker has not forgot his Logic; I would recommend it to him, once more to look into the doctrine of causes; When he has done this, let him *seriously* attend to the following paragraph,—
 "Salvation is not by the works of the law of innocence, nor by the law of Moses;——*nor is it by the merit of any works*||." When he has done this, let him lay his hand upon his heart; and then

* Matthew xxv.—40, &c. † Rev. iii.—10.

‡ Rev. vii.—14, 15. § Prov. i.—24, 26.

|| Free Thoughts, page 58.

then let him say—whether gospel obedience doth not class amongst the *causes* of Salvation; though it be not the efficient, nor the meritorious cause? And, if it do; how he will ascribe less to it in the business of our Salvation, than the Author of the Free Thoughts hath done? Should he find himself embarrassed, as I am apprehensive he will, by this mode of procedure; it will, at least, have a tendency to cure his impotent attempts at wit; and convince him, that something more is necessary, than *peeping* into an Author, the next time he is disposed to cavil!

The Author of the Free Thoughts says, “*If a doctrine opposes any of the known attributes of GOD, however strongly it may appear to be supported by Scripture, it should be rejected; and the Scriptures which seem to favor it, must be either wrongly translated, or misunderstood* *.”

To

* Free Thoughts, page 4.

To this position, the Remarker accedes, when he says: "*To which standard, and by which rule, we are heartily willing all our doctrines should be reduced and tried. He believes, that the Calvinist doctrines, rightly stated and explained, coincide with the perfections of GOD; and is not satisfied—that the Arminian doctrines do correspond with the perfections of GOD*.*"

Was the Author of the Free Thoughts an Arminian, the parties would be at issue, as the Lawyers say; but if he is not an Arminian, if he supposes absolute Promises, and an absolute Salvation for the Elect; in a word, if he is what Calvinists have called a Baxterian; then it will appear, that the Remarker has been fighting with a shadow, and producing his strong reasons against a mere phantom; while the Author sits smiling in a whole skin!—To decide this matter, let us hear the Author.

* Remarks, page 3.

" That

“ That Election implies Reprobation in some sense, is certain;—but not of necessity such a Reprobation as is defined above, and in which sense *only*, it is opposed in the following pages: for, admitting that there is an Elect, whose Salvation is *certain*, it does not necessarily follow, that all the rest of mankind *must* be excluded from God's mercy, and the benefits of a Saviour's death*.”

Here we see, the Author admits of an Elect, whose Salvation is certain. And here I might fairly be excused from attending the Remarker any farther: as I only engaged to bear the Author of the Free Thoughts harmless from any Arguments he has produced. But in that case, what would become of all his specious arguments upon the perfections of God!

“ Pity such golden Hopes should fail!”

But

* Free Thoughts, page 2, 3.

But you say, "I am an Arminian; and it is incumbent upon me to defend Arminianism." Be it so then; only let us not forget—that the Remarker has left the Author of the Free Thoughts in full possession of all his strong holds, in favor of universal Redemption; and that absolute Reprobation is still left to shift for itself, and look like a Reprobate!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

S I R,

WE have seen the Remarker foiled
in his Attack upon a Baxterian!
Let us see whether he will have any
better success upon a reputed Arminian.

A just idea upon the perfections of
GOD, is the foundation of Religion.—
I am therefore always pleased when I
find an Author solicitous to hold up
these perfections in such a light as to
command esteem, and adoration! I

G

give

give the Remarker credit for his good intentions; but whether his argument for this purpose be quite so proper——time and trial will discover.

GOD the lovely, and loving Father of angels and men, brought them into existence the more effectually to display his own glorious perfections, in promoting, and securing their felicity; both present, and everlasting. This leading truth, I take to be so legibly written on all his works, as to command assent from every diligent and careful observer; especially if he hath his Bible in his hands.

Take a survey of Nature, as far as it comes under human observation, and the result will be,——*All thy works praise thee, O God! Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord! In wisdom hast thou made them all! The earth is full*

*full of thy goodness! Thy mercies are
over all thy works*!*

To these truths the greatest genius's, the most able, studious, careful observers of the works of the GOD of nature, have subscribed:—Newton, Boyle, Locke, Ray, Durham, Wesley, Harvey, &c. &c. at home; and La Pluche, and Bonnet, abroad, stand forward on the lists of fame; and with one voice proclaim happiness, compleat happiness (as far as free agency and limited powers will admit) to be the end GOD proposed to himself in the creation.

Men are accountable creatures: there is a reason for it in the will of their Maker. “GOD hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.” There is also a reason for it in the nature and constitution of man. Man is endowed with reason and choice. Suppose him divested of these, and he

G 2

would

* Pfalms.

would be as unaccountable as brutes. I add, as stocks or stones! Liberty of action is the natural result of these conclusions. Man is a free agent, because he is an unaccountable creature. Men, whether wicked, worldly-minded men; or religious men, proceed in all their dealings with one another upon this supposition.

GOD, the GOD of truth, appeals to the same principles, throughout the Scriptures. The ministers of religion go upon the very same supposition;—else why do they make any appeals to reason and conscience? Why do they ply their hearers with motives and arguments at all? To these first principles, I add;

1. That from a Being who is goodness in the abstract, nothing but good can proceed.

2. That

2. That from a Being who is evil in the abstract, nothing but evil can proceed.

3. From Beings with circumscribed limited powers, who are in a state of probation; and have some traces of good, mixed with much evil; good or evil may proceed.

These first principles premised;—I proceed to attend the Remarker upon the perfections of GOD. His arguments to prove—that the Arminian system doth not correspond with the perfections of God, begin with that of his love.

*“What kind of Love must that be, which does not effectually secure the Salvation of one person? It cannot be that Love which God bears to his own people, which is productive of their eternal Salvation. Whereas, according to the universal scheme, God loved Peter no more than he loved Judas; nor the Saints that are now
in*

in heaven, any more than those that are now in hell: No, they were all loved alike, and equally redeemed by the blood of Christ! Nor is it that Love of God which is immutable, invariable, and unchangeable: Since, according to the Arminian scheme, God loves man with so intense a Love at one time, as to give his only Son to die for them, and wills that they should be saved;—and now this Love is turned into hatred and wrath against them; and he determines to punish them with everlasting destruction! What sort of Love must this be in God, not to spare his own Son, but to deliver him up unto death for all the individuals of mankind, for their redemption; and yet multitudes of them he does not so much as favor with the Holy Scriptures, or with a preached Gospel to inform them of Redemption by Christ:—but suffers them to live and die in ignorance and unbelief! Such Love as this must surely be unworthy of the God of Love *!”

“ GOD

* Remarks, pages 4, 5.

"God loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity *;" invariably, unchangeably, and for ever. But the question is; whether no possible change in the creature, may bring on a change in the behaviour of God towards him? And if so, whether this change of conduct towards the creature, argues any reasonable impeachment of his Love, or unchangeableness? To illustrate my meaning by scriptural facts——

1. It is said of God, with respect to the Jews in the Wilderness; "In his love and pity he bare them, and carried them all the days of old †." Of the same persons, at another time, it is said, "He sware in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest!" And we are admonished, "To take heed lest we also fall, through the same example of unbelief!" God loved them once: For their rebellions, he rejected them afterwards. Doth this impeach his unchangeable Love? If it doth, the Remarker

* Heb. i. † Ibid. iii.

marker is as much obliged to account for it, as I am :—it being asserted in a book he is bound to defend, as much as I am ; unless he chuses to give up his Bible ! If it doth not ; if notwithstanding this alteration in the conduct of Jehovah, towards the same persons at different times, and upon different behaviour, he is still unchangeable in his love ; then is he equally so in the case to which the Remarker hath refered. I produce a second instance :—

2. Our first part parents were created in the image of God ; and he pronounced—that they were very good *. They were threatened with death, in case of disobedience. They disobeyed ; and the penalty was inflicted. Did the infliction of this penalty, argue any thing against the unchangeable Love of God ? If it doth not in this case, then not in the other. Take another instance :—

* Genesis i,

3. Of some wretched beings, the Scriptures say:—"That they are reserved in chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Christian divines are generally agreed—that these unhappy beings were once glorious angels in Heaven! And Jude affirms, "that they were the angels that sinned." They were the objects of GOD's Love! They are not so now;—but they are the objects of his wrath in hell! Doth this militate against the unchangeable Love of GOD? And if it does not; then this kind of argument against Arminianism is very harmless; and leaves them in full possession of their cause.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

H

LETTER

LETTER V.

S I R,

FOR some years, I have been persuaded, *that the dispute between the Calvinists and the Arminians, greatly resembles that between Jehovah and the Jews:—*I will state my idea of it, and then cite some striking parts of that Controversy; and apply them to the case in hand.

1. In virtue of the promises made to their great progenitors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Jews concluded—
that

that they were, exclusively, the people of God. Those promises they understood; or, at least, pleaded they understood, to be absolute.

2. They drew the same conclusion from the many remarkable divine interpositions in favor of their nation :—The most extraordinary interpositions alluded to are—the destruction of Pharoah and his host in the Red-sea, while they went over dry shod ;—bringing water out of the rock ;—supporting them with food from heaven, for many years ;—the solemn delivery of the law, wrote by the finger of the Almighty, &c. &c. On the other hand :—

1. The *conditionality* of the covenant was alluded to, in the promises to Abraham.

2. Those to Israel in Ægypt, when they were in misery and distress, have an absolute form ; and the conditions

are not once mentioned, though they *assuredly were conditional.*

3. At the delivery of the law, and subsequent to it in the Wilderness, God often explained himself upon the *conditionality of the Covenant*: and more fully still by his Prophets, in answer to the objections of the Jews.

1. The first set of promises to Abraham were conceived in these terms:—
 “ I will make of thee a great nation,
 “ and I will bless thee, and make thy
 “ name great; and thou shalt be a
 “ blessing: and I will bless them that
 “ bless thee; and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the
 “ families of the earth be blessed.”—
 These promises were conditioned with,
 “ Get thee out of thy country, and
 “ from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.” These promises are afterwards illustrated and confirmed.

God

GOD says:—" I will establish my co-
 " venant between me and thee, and thy
 " seed after thee, in their generations,
 " for an everlasting covenant; to be a
 " GOD unto thee and thy seed after
 " thee. And I will give unto thee, and
 " to thy seed after thee, the land where-
 " in thou art a stranger, all the land
 " of Canaan, for an everlasting posses-
 " sion; and I will be their GOD.—
 " And GOD said unto Abraham, Thou
 " shalt keep my covenant therefore,
 " thou and thy seed after thee. This
 " is my covenant which ye shall keep
 " between me and you, and thy seed
 " after thee:——*every male child among*
 " *you shall be circumcised.*"

It was to these promises, and parti-
 cularly to that great promise—*I will be*
a God to thee and thy seed; and in thy
seed shall all the nations of the earth be
blessed; that the Apostle to the Gala-
 tians alludes, where he says:——*God*
preached

preached the Gospel unto Abraham.—
These promises were conditional.

2. We now come to the promises made to Israel in Ægypt.—“ The LORD
“ GOD of your fathers, the GOD of
“ Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob
“ appeared unto me, saying: I have
“ surely visited you, and seen that which
“ is done to you in Ægypt:—I have
“ said, I will bring you up out of the
“ affliction of Ægypt, unto the land
“ of the Canaanites, and the Amorites,
“ and the Perezrites, and the Hittites,
“ and Jebuzites, unto a land flowing
“ with milk and honey. God spake
“ unto Moses, and said unto him:—
“ *I am the Lord*; and I appeared unto
“ Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, by
“ the name of—*God Almighty*;—and I
“ have established my covenant with
“ them, to give them the land of Ca-
“ naan:—I have heard the groaning of
“ the children of Israel, whom the Æ-
gyptians

“gyptians keep in bondage:—*I have*
 “*remembered my covenant.* I will take
 “you to me for a people, and I will
 “be to you for a GOD: and ye shall
 “know that I am the LORD your GOD:
 “and I will bring you unto the land
 “concerning which I did swear, to
 “give it Abraham, to Isaac, and to
 “Jacob: and I will give to you for an
 “heritage. *I am the Lord*!*”

Here then, are promises again, and
 again repeated; absolute in their form
 as words can make them: made in vir-
 tue of a covenant GOD had entered
 into with their great ancestors Abraham,
 Isaac, and Jacob:—That GOD would
 redeem them out of Ægypt;—that he
 would be their GOD, and they should
 be his people; and that he would bring
 them into the land of Canaan; most so-
 lemnly ratified by that awful word—
I am the Lord! confirmed afterwards
 by miracles of vengeance on their ene-
 mies,

* Exod. vi.—2, &c.

mies, and extraordinary merciful interpositions in their favor!

Hence, it appears, That they were greatly beloved of the LORD!—*In his love and pity he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* That they were in covenant with GOD.—*This covenant God gave to Abraham by promise;—and it was ordained by angels, in the hands of a Mediator*.* Hence it also appears, That, for the nature of it, it was the covenant of Grace! the Gospel Covenant!

But they were unmindful of his covenant! They lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation! And then he says to them:—“ Because all those
“ men which have seen my glory, and
“ my miracles which I did in Ægypt,
“ and in the Wilderness, and have not
“ hearkened to my voice: surely they
“ shall

* Gal. iii.—19,

“ shall not see the land which I swear
 “ unto their fathers. But my servant
 “ Caleb, because he had another spirit
 “ with him, and hath followed me fully,
 “ him will I bring unto the land: and
 “ Joshua the son of Nun. As for you,
 “ your carcases shall fall in the Wilder-
 “ ness. After the number of days in
 “ which ye searched out the land, even
 “ forty days (each day for a year) shall
 “ ye bear your iniquities, even forty
 “ years, — AND YE SHALL KNOW MY
 “ BREACH OF PROMISE.*!”

Here we have the covenant oath on
 God's part, alluded to in the former
 promises: The covenant engagements
 which they were obliged to keep, but
 had broken, on their part: The with-
 drawing covenant mercies: The de-
 nouncing awful judgments against them,
 concluded with those very awful words;
 —YE SHALL KNOW MY BREACH OF
 PROMISE!

I

To

* Numb. xiv.—20, &c.

To shew how far the professors of Christianity are concerned in these solemn truths, let the great Apostle of the Gentiles be heard.

“ I would not have ye ignorant,
 “ brethren, that all our fathers were
 “ under the cloud, and all passed through
 “ the sea. And were all baptized unto
 “ Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea :
 “ And did all eat the same spiritual
 “ meat ; and did all drink the same
 “ spiritual drink. For they drank of
 “ that Rock that followed them, and
 “ that Rock was Christ. But with many
 “ of them God was not well pleased :
 “ for they were overthrown in the Wil-
 “ derness. Now these things were our
 “ examples, to the intent that we should
 “ not lust after evil things, as they also
 “ lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as
 “ were some of them : as it is written,
 “ *The people sat down to eat and drink,*
 “ *and rose up to play.* Neither let us
 “ commit

“ commit fornication, as some of them
 “ committed, and fell in one day three
 “ and twenty thousand. Neither let
 “ us tempt Christ, as some of them also
 “ tempted, and were destroyed of ser-
 “ pents. Neither murmur ye as some
 “ of them also murmured, and were
 “ destroyed by the destroyer. Now all
 “ these things happened unto them for
 “ *ensamples*: and they are written for
 “ our admonition. Wherefore, let him
 “ that standeth, take heed, lest he fall* !”

You observe, Sir, that I have left the
 word *thinketh* out of the text: and you
 are surprized at it:—the rather so, be-
 cause, you say, great stress has been
 laid upon it;—as *if they only thought they*
stood! You are right, my dear Friend;
 and I hope I am right too. I left it out
 because it is left out by some able Critics;
 and also, because I conceived it had no
 right to stand there in opposition to the
 context. However, for a moment, let

I 2

us

* 1 Cor. x.—1, &c

us attend to *their* construction. They *only think they stand*: They are self-deceivers then; and must the sense needs be—That these wretched self-deceivers, who are fallen already, must *take special heed lest they fall!* Who can help admiring the sagacity of such Critics!—The profound depth of such Reasoners! But leaving such Expositors, and their criticisms; let us hasten on to the next instance.

“ If thou wilt not observe to do all
 “ the words of this law, that are written
 “ in this book, that thou mayest fear
 “ this great and glorious name—*The*
 “ *Lord thy God*.—Then the LORD will
 “ make thy plagues great and wonder-
 “ ful—because thou wouldst not obey
 “ the voice of the LORD thy GOD.—
 “ Even all nations shall say,—*Wherefore*
 “ *hath God done thus unto this land?*—
 “ Then men shall say—because they
 “ have forsaken the covenant of the
 “ GOD of their fathers *.”

Then

* Deut. xxviii.—58, 59.—Ibid xxix.—24, 25.

Then shall men say—thus they have said these seventeen hundred years;—they say so now;—and they will say so till they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and be in bitterness as one for his first-born*. But this sufficiently demonstrates the conditionality of the covenant of Grace to the Jews! Compare the following passages:—

“ The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas the son of Eliezer, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned away my wrath from the children of Israel—wherefore say—Behold, I give unto him my covenant of Peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel†.”—

This promise was accomplished:—the priesthood was continued in his family till the wicked sons of Eli, brake the covenant of their GOD. A man of

GOD

* Zach. xiii.—1.

† Numb. xxv.—10, &c.

GOD then comes to Eli, and says,—
*The Lord God of Israel saith: I said,
indeed, that thy house, and the house of
thy father, should walk before me for ever;
but now the Lord saith—Be it far from
me: for they that honor me, I will honor;
and they that despise me, shall be lightly
esteemed*!*”

Here is a man with whom **GOD** enters into a covenant of Peace, for himself, and his descendants:—This covenant is confirmed by the promise of a perpetual Priesthood; absolute and unqualified in its terms. The performance keeps pace with the promise, till his descendants turn rebels to **GOD**. As they had broken the covenant on their part,—a man of **GOD** comes to denounce a renunciation of it on **GOD**'s part. Hence we see that it was a conditional covenant, though the conditions were not expressed, when the promise was first made!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

* 1 Sam. ii.—30.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

THE Jews were not satisfied with this method of explaining the terms of the covenant:—*They had changed the laws, transgressed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant**; and yet they still claimed an absolute, exclusive right to the blessings of the covenant! They murmured, they complained, they repined (though they had broke through all the stipulated duties of the covenant) as if God had dealt hardly with them!

GOD,

* Isaiah xxiv—5.

GOD, by one of his Prophets, compares the relation he stood in to them, to a marriage relation:—*I am married to you, saith the Lord* *. *Thy Maker is thy husband* †. Still alluding to the same figure—*when they had behaved themselves frowardly in his covenant*; he puts them away, and calls for the Bill of Divorcement, that the fault might appear to be their own. “Thus saith the Lord:—Where is the bill of your mother’s divorcement whom I have put away? or to which of my creditors have I sold you? Behold, for your iniquities ye have sold yourselves!” Thus we see, GOD retorts the charge, and ascribes it to their iniquities and transgressions. Had their allegations been true, they must have originated, either in his want of power, or his want of inclination:—With respect to the former, he asks—*Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver* ‡?

That

* Jer. iii—14. † Isa. liv—5. ‡ Ibid l.—1, &c.

That it cannot justly be ascribed to want of power appears from the following demonstration of it, to which he refers them.—*Behold, at my rebuke, I dry up the sea! I make their rivers a wilderness!—I clothe the heavens with blackness!—I make sackcloth their covering!* Can he possibly want power who gives *such proofs* of Omnipotence?—But is his will equal to his power?—Doth he not want inclination? To give a satisfactory answer to this question, and for ever silence the objectors, he assumes the character of the Redeemer, and refers to his sufferings as the great proof of his love to sinners! *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheek to them that plucked off the hair!* He is wounded for our transgressions! He is bruised for our iniquities! For *ours*:—for whose? For all who went astray like lost sheep! He made intercession for the transgressors*! Hence he claims to be a universal Saviour, unless there can be

K

found

* Isaiah liii.—6, &c.

found those who did not go astray like lost sheep! who have not transgressed! Let the Remarker find these out, and then he may be allowed to circumscribe the Love of GOD! and fritter down Redemption to the *narrow limits of a narrow-minded party!*

The following charge decides, for the present, the contest—proclaims the victory—and silences all opposers.—Who is among you that feareth the LORD—that obeyeth the voice of his servant—that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay himself upon his GOD! *Try me, prove me, and see, whether I am not both able and willing to save! Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God*!*

They still went on frowardly in his covenant:—He complains, that their prophets

* Isa. xlv.—22.

prophets prophesied falsely, their priests bare rule by their means, and the people loved to have it so*:" And God solemnly asks, "What will ye do in the end thereof?" Still they said; The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these! strongly implying,—That God, and religion, were all their own! That they were the men, and wisdom should die with them. God challenges them, with a redundancy of awful interrogatories; which at once proclaim their shame, and his victory, in putting them to silence and confusion. "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other Gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say—*We are delivered to do all these abominations* †?"

K 2

A pre-

* Jer. v.—ult. † Ibid vii.—4, &c.

A pretended Calvinist, who under shew of attributing all to Grace, destroys the freedom of human actions—reduces man to a mere machine—so states the doctrine of the Fall as to exculpate sinners—who so speaks of divine influence, as to annihilate moral agency;—I say, one of these bare-faced Antinomians, who can instruct the Elect how they may sin safely, because God sees no sin in Jacob, nor any perverseness in Israel! I say, such a one thinks the plea is a good one; and therefore takes up the weapons, and comes again to the charge:—We are delivered to do all these abominations, says the Objector, by an absolute decree.

GOD, (says he) hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass! Sin comes to pass:—therefore **GOD** hath fore-ordained sin. If, to state this impious argument does not silence the Opposer, (it did silence his Jewish confederates!) let him read the following awful denunciation of **GOD**'s displeasure against those

con-

confederates; and while he reads, let him tremble at the consequences on his own account! *Because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you rising up early, and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not: therefore I will do unto this house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, as I have done unto Shiloh:—I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren*!—* I add—that the accomplishment of these predictions may be read in the faces of their descendants at this very day!

You and I, my dear Sir, have been awfully affected with this last charge from the Heavenly Artillery! But we must not forget that the enemy are rallying again, under the standard of a popular proverb. Let us hear what the great Captain-General will say, to their conduct, on this occasion.

What

* Jer. vii.—13, &c.

What mean ye (saith the LORD) that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

As I live (saith the LORD) ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Had one of the *hardened Jews* commented upon this proverb, I fancy it would have run nearly in the following strain:—Our predecessors are accused of having broken the commands of GOD; and he is punishing us for their crimes: crimes which we cannot help! A *pretended Calvinian commentator*, would translate the proverb thus: Adam was the federal head of all mankind: Had he stood in his original rectitude, they had stood with him: As he sinned and fell, they sinned and fell in, or with him: And those that are passed by, cannot help it: They are in by dire necessity!

Thus

Thus we see, the stoical destiny predominates, according to both these!— And hence that remarkable charge brought against them by JEHOVAH.— *Yet ye say—Why, doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?* The answer of GOD to this questionable objection, as to the equity of his proceedings, is very remarkable; as it fixes the meaning of the term——*BEAR the iniquity of the father.*

“ The soul that sinneth, it shall die. (Die the second death!) The son shall not bear (*eternally bear*) the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear (*eternally bear*) the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous, shall be upon him; and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if a wicked man will turn from all his sins, that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live: he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath

hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? (saith the LORD GOD) and not that he should return from his ways and live? But when the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth—*shall he live?*—all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned. In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die*.” I said this passage was remarkable, for fixing the meaning of the term—to BEAR iniquity.

1. Here we see—That to *bear iniquity*, or to *die*, are used as convertible terms; *i. e.* They are put indifferently for each other. In other words, what is bearing iniquity in one verse, is dying in another.

2. The

* Ezek. xviii.—1, &c.

2. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; but the soul that sinneth, it shall die:—cannot here be understood of temporal punishments, nor of temporal or natural death merely——That is, the death of the body;—because, in this sense, numbers do and must bear the iniquity of their fathers. Death, in this sense, came by sin.

3. It follows—That to bear iniquity, or to die, means to bear it hereafter, as the punishment of sin; which, in scripture, is called the *second death*. The wages of sin, is death *!

Hence, Jehovah positively asserts—Every man shall die for his *own* sin.—The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father.—The soul that sinneth, it shall die. And consequently the objecting Jews are here understood as defending themselves upon the footing of necessity. And their defence could not be overturned upon supposition, that

L any

* Romans vi.—ult.

any thing short of punishment after this life, was meant by this proverb. Still they insist upon it—That the ways of the LORD are not equal, just, or right. In return, he says—*Hear now, O house of Israel! are not my ways equal?—Are not your ways unequal?* And again affirms—*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and commiteth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done, shall he die!*

Here then, the parties are at issue:—They charge GOD with being unequitable in his ways, in laying them (by their connexions with their wicked predecessors) under a necessity to sin, and perish. GOD retorts the charge of want of equity upon themselves:—affirms, the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; but that the soul that sinneth, (*personally sinneth*) it shall die.

So

So stands the dispute : but the question that is of importance to us is——
 On what side of the dispute do we range?
 Are we on the LORD's side, for—Moral agency, and the possibility of a righteous man's turning away from his righteousness, dying in his backsliding, and so being punished for ever?—Or, do we class with the Jewish Objectors, and the pretended Calvinists, in asserting dire necessity as an excuse for our sins?

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
 Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

So much the higher : but the great
importance of it is in
the fact that the diploma is wrong
and we are not to be told that it is
the same, and the possibility of a
man's mind being turned away from his
duty, and in his factitious
and in being punished for every thing
do we think with the Jewish Chronic
and the world of Christians, in which
the nation is in a state of confusion

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. HARRISON

Yours for ever,
J. H. HARRISON

LATTER

LETTER VII.

S I R,

IN the prophet Ezekiel, the duty of a prophet of the LORD, a minister of religion, is aptly illustrated by the figure of a watchman placed upon an high tower; whose business it is to keep a good look out upon the enemy, and warn the people when he sees approaching danger. And GOD is represented, as applying this beautiful figure to the prophet.

“ So O thou son of man, I have set
“ thee a watchman unto the house of
“ Israel;

“ Israel ; therefore thou shalt hear the
 “ word at my mouth, and warn them
 “ from me. When I say unto the wic-
 “ ked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely
 “ die ; if thou dost not speak to warn
 “ the wicked man from his way, that
 “ wicked man shall die in his iniquity ;
 “ but his blood will I require at thine
 “ hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the
 “ wicked of his way to turn from it ; if
 “ he do not turn from his way, he shall
 “ die in his iniquity ; but thou hast de-
 “ livered thy soul.” This striking ex-
 ordium is beautifully preparatory to the
 following awful charge :—

“ Therefore, O thou son of man,
 “ speak unto the house of Israel, Thus
 “ ye speak, saying, If our transgressions
 “ and our sins be upon us, and we pine
 “ away and die in them, how shall we
 “ then live ?”

They are charged as if they had said,
 Prophet, you have often threatened us
 with

with death and destruction for our sins. We do not believe you :—you are inconsistent with yourself ; and there is still a greater opposition between you, and the promises of GOD, which he made to Abraham and his seed,—to Moses and his people.

These promises are absolute and unconditional. The Gospel was preached to Abraham :—and it was not a conditional Gospel, clogged with your *IFS* and *BUTS* ; but an absolute Gospel, full of absolute promises ;—promises made to him and his seed ;—to him and to us. Not a word of condition mentioned in them !

How do you reconcile these contradictions ?—How will you put life and death together ?—How can we both die, and live ?—If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we must pine away and die in them, how should we then live ? *Thus ye speak, and thus ye say.*
And

And do not the *pretended Calvinists* speak, and say, the same things?—Do not both contend for *absolute personal Election*?—Do not both contend for *Destiny*; for *dire Necessity*?—Do not both contend for *absolute unconditional Perseverance*? Come forth then, you Jewdaizing Christians! and hear the answer of God, to this mighty difficulty, which your confederates, in this worthy cause have proposed!

“ Say unto them—As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” As if he should say; “ You have often misrepresented your Maker, with respect to his promises;—you would have them be absolute, when they were expressly conditional! Now you misconceive my threatnings too.—You go upon the supposition that they are absolute, and that you *must die*;—
and

and that I delight in your death and destruction;—whereas, the fact is, That I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked:—I have pleasure in his present and eternal Salvation. All my exhortations prove this: Turn ye, turn ye: so do my remonstrances. What could I have done more for my vineyard, that I have not done for it? Why will ye die, O house of Israel? And now I most solemnly bind, and ratify the whole with my oath;—and because an oath is for confirmation, and an end of all strife; I swear by myself—by my own life—I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that he turn from his way and live.”

And now, what remains to be seen, but—whether we will credit the *Jewish Rebels*, and the *pretended Calvinists*, with absolute Election and Reprobation;—absolute Necessity, and absolute Perseverance;—or, the God of Truth, with conditional Election and Reprobation,

M

Free

Free Agency, together with Accountableness for our Actions;—and a conditional Perseverance;—solemnly proved too, by his express declarations, by his earnest exhortations, by his pathetic remonstrances: And all this sealed and confirmed by his oath! What a redundancy of evidence is here! Who is on the LORD's side, who? Let him put on the whole armour of GOD, and boldly stand forth against these enemies of the LORD,—“and justify the ways of GOD with men.”

After all this, one would suppose—That these noisy disputants would have left the field somewhat crest-fallen; with less unconscionable strides than when they first advanced! Instead of this—They rear their brazen front again! and, to adopt one of the Remarkers's elegancies—“*They bring the same old stale arguments, and objections, which have been answered again and again!*”

“ Yet

“ Yet the children of thy people say;”
 The way of the LORD is not equal.
 A positive, dogmatizing spirit, is never
 to be satisfied : we see, that the strongest
 arguments which GOD could produce,
 were insufficient for the purpose!—He
 therefore repeats what he had so fre-
 quently urged before. “ When a right-
 “ eous man turneth from his righteous-
 “ ness, and committeth iniquity, HE
 “ SHALL EVEN DIE THEREBY! But,
 “ if the wicked man turn from his wic-
 “ kedness, he shall live thereby. Yet
 “ ye say—*The way of the Lord is not*
 “ *equal!* and concludes with these aw-
 “ ful words:—*O ye house of Israel, I*
 “ *will judge ye every one after his ways!*”

“ *Are not my ways equal?—Are not*
your ways unequal?” The great truth
 JEHOVAH inculcates, and repeats so
 frequently is:—That no man will be
 finally saved without personal holiness,
persevered in: and that no man will
 perish, or die eternally; *but by personal,*

and final Impenitence. If any man can overturn these positions, he will outjew the Jews themselves!

Not after (or according to) absolute unconditional decrees;—not after a system which coolly, and determinedly devotes myriads and myriads of men to destruction, because one man sinned five or six thousand years ago;—not after a system of human, fallible composition, called Articles of Faith; which are supposed to preserve the truth, and secure us from error, much better than God hath done; but I will judge you every one after *his ways*!

But there is another objection, yet behind: Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Son of Man, those that inhabit the wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: But we are many, the land is given to us for inheritance*.

ritance*. *i. e.* The promises were originally made to our great ancestor Abraham, and to his seed. He was put in possession according to the promise: Would God fulfill his promise to Abraham, who was but one; and will he revoke to us, who are many? What is freer than gift? Will he give and take back again? What a changeable God doth this suppose him to be! Prophet, we hold fast by the Promises. Would you rob us of our comfort? The promises, the promises, and possession as an earnest of their completion, give us perfect security!

Is there no analogy between this language, and that of those who say:—The Covenant was made with our surety, not with us; and so sure as he is in heaven, so sure are the Elect of going there. You may as easily pluck Christ from heaven, as one of the Elect miscarry!

To

* Ezekiel xxxiii.—24, &c.

To modest humble Christians, who know their own imperfections, I have not an hard word to say: while we are humble we are safe. But these Election Boasters, who rarely fail to thrust themselves and their party, into the Covenant, are desired calmly to review with me, the following threatening against their *Brethren*; against those who had as good, if not a better right to plead absolute promises, than ever a *pretended Calvinist* in England!

“ Thus saith the LORD GOD:—Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes towards your idols, and shed blood;—and shall ye possess the land? Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abominations, and ye defile every one his neighbour’s wife;—and shall ye possess the land?— Thus saith the LORD GOD:—As I live, surely they that are in the wastes shall fall by the sword; and him that is in the open fields, will I give to the beasts to be devoured: And they that are in
the

the forts and in the caves shall die of the pestilence. And I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease: And the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, and none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the LORD!"

I shall not apply these threatnings: That is not my business. But am I wrong, in beseeching every man who talks of an absolute Covenant, absolute Promises, and an absolute Salvation, (while yet he lives in the omission of any known duty, in the deliberate practice of known wilful sin) to lay his hand on his heart and say—LORD, is it I? Am I the man? *Then shall they know that I am LORD!*—They would not know me by my mercies:—They shall know me by my judgments! They represented me as an absolute tyrant!—The Father of necessity, instead of the Father of mercies!—An hard Master, reaping where I have not sown; and
all

all this, to acquit themselves to themselves, and wipe their mouth and say—
I have done no harm!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

S I R,

THE universal corruption and depravity of mankind, is a theme on which these men frequently employ their eloquence. But I apprehend it lies deeper,—and that the human heart is more depraved, than they are willing to allow. Behold then, the strongest of all possible proofs! When Adam was interrogated with—“Hast thou eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, that thou shouldest not eat?” The answer was,—“The woman that thou gavest me, she gave me, and

N

I did

I did eat." When the woman was asked — "Why hast thou done thus?" She replied—"The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."—Here we have instances full in point, to shew how very much *self-love* predominated; but where (save in the *rebellious hardened Jews*, or in the *pretended Calvinists*, i. e. the *real Antinomians*;) shall we find instances of men *justifying themselves, at the expence of their Maker!*

I close my Old Testament quotations with that striking declaration of the GOD of Love:—"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: but in me is thy help*." And I am quite regardless, though the Remarker should charge me, as he doth the Arminians, with making GOD and his Love changeable.

GOD hath sufficiently vindicated his Love to men, as we have seen in the grand dispute with the Jewish Necessarians;

* Hosea xiii.—18.

farians; and I am sure I have so much of this divine Principle, as sincerely to wish—that neither the *pretended Calvinists*, nor their Defender, (*the Remarker*) may ever be convinced, by experimentally feeling the weight of the last awful argument GOD made use of, with their Jewish confederates!

I now proceed to the second Argument the Remarker produces, upon the Divine Perfections; and which he states as follows:—

“ The universal *Scheme*, highly reflects upon the *Wisdom of God*.”

“ It is certain, God is wonderful in
 “ council, in contriving the *Scheme* of
 “ Redemption, and in the execution of
 “ it. He is the wise GOD, and our
 “ Saviour, as such: but where is his
 “ wisdom in forming a *Scheme* in which
 “ he fails in his end? There must be
 “ some deficiency in it, a want of wisdom
 “ to concert a *Scheme* which is not,

“ or cannot be carried into execution ;
 “ at least, as to a considerable part of it.
 “ Should it be said—That the failure,
 “ is owing to some mens not perform-
 “ ing the conditions therein required :
 “ it should be observed, either that God
 “ did know, or he did not know, that
 “ those men would not perform the
 “ Conditions required. If he did not
 “ know, this imputes the want of know-
 “ ledge to God; which surely ought
 “ never to be said or thought of Him
 “ that knoweth all things. If he *did*
 “ *know*, they would not perform the
 “ Conditions required:—where is his
 “ wisdom in providing the blessings of
 “ Redemption and Salvation for them,
 “ which he knew before-hand, would
 “ be of no service to them?—*O let not*
 “ *such a charge of weakness and folly, be*
 “ *be imputed to infinite wisdom* *.”

God elects to himself, a people out of
 all the earth; and prefers them to all
 others!—Works astonishing miracles in
 proof

* Remarks, pages 5, 6.

proof of their being his people !—Gives them a law written with his own hand ; and pronounced in their hearing, with his own voice. He proposes the display of his own glorious perfections :—particularly his wisdom, in their happy establishment in the land of Canaan.—*The great and precious promises*, which make over this grant to them, are conceived in absolute terms ; but which, as he explains them, are to be conditionally understood. *He fails in his principal End* ; (to use the Remarker's expression) and none of them to whom the Promises were originally made, are put into possession, save two. And “ *this failure was owing to these men not performing the Conditions required !* ”—Will he say—“ *There must be some deficiency in it ; a want of wisdom to concert a scheme which cannot be carried into execution ?* ”

SCHEME !—I would have said system—plan—or any thing—rather than

than Scheme:——it favors so much of art and cunning, that I would much rather apply it to some crafty statesman, who hath designs against the liberties of his country—than to the only wise God.

And now I retort his dilemma back upon himself; and let him get clear of it as he can.——“ Either God did know, or he did not know, that those men would not perform the Conditions required of them. *To say, He did not know, imputes want of knowledge to Him who knows all things!* If he did know, where is his wisdom, in providing the blessings of Redemption and Salvation for them, which he knew before hand, would be of no service to them?—— O let not such a charge of weakness and folly, be imputed to infinite wisdom!”

Man was originally created in the image of God.—He was very happy, because

because he was very good. God intended him to continue in this state of happiness; and gave him a law, the performance of which, would have secured it. But, "*he did not perform the Conditions required;*" and forfeited his happy state. Hence, if we may use the Remarker's expression, "*God failed of his End.*" God knew, or he did not know, whether Adam and Eve would perform the Conditions required of them. If the Remarker says,—"*He did not know;*" this imputes *the want of knowledge* to Him who knows all things. *If he did know,* they would not perform the Conditions required; where is His wisdom, in providing the blessings of Paradise for them, which he knew before hand, would be of no service to them? *O let not such a charge of weakness and folly be imputed to unerring wisdom!*"

God brought the holy happy angels into existence, for his glory and their happiness: Some of them sinned against
the

the GOD of their life, and the law of their creation. These happy spirits became wretched and miserable ones!—Did “GOD fail of his end” in making them?—Or, because he foreknew they would not perform the Conditions required of them—Did it argue want of wisdom in GOD to create them, and provide the means of their felicity?—*O let not such weakness and folly, be imputed to infinite wisdom!*

I think I have met the Remarker's argument fairly; and as fairly and fully retorted it upon himself. I shall impatiently expect his justification of himself, from imputing weakness and folly to unerring wisdom!

I conclude this head with referring the Remarker, and his friends, to the story of the vessel that was marred in the hands of the potter*:—And to the parable of the good husbandman sowing good

* Jer. xviii.

good seed, and the enemy coming and sowing tares, which sprang up and choaked it*, for illustration; and I hope he will not again hastily conclude against the wisdom and propriety of a plan, because it does not in every respect, answer the original end of the Author! I hope, the Remarker has projected some very good plans in his time; and proposed some very good ends by them. May I be permitted to ask—Has he always been successful?—Have they always answered the end?—Has he never been disappointed in his expectation? If he has:—let him learn to be less confident in writing weakness and folly upon a system, because not in every respect successful; and more especially, let him not decide ex cathedra upon the Divine Conduct.

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

O LETTER

* Matt. xiii.—37.

LETTER IX.

SIR,

I NOW attend the Remarker to what he says upon the Justice of God.—

“The universal Scheme highly reflects on the *justice of God*. God is just and righteous in all his ways; and so in this of Redemption by Christ. And indeed, one end of it is—To declare the righteousness of God, that he might be just, or appear to be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*. But if Christ died for the sins of all men, and the

* Romans iii.—26.

the punishment of their sins was inflicted on him, and borne by him, and yet, multitudes of them are punished everlastingly for them, where is the justice of GOD?—It is reckoned unjust in men to punish twice for the same offence. If one man pays another's debts, would it be just in the creditor to exact, require, and receive payment again at the hands of the Debtor? And if Christ has paid the debt for all men, can it be just to arrest such persons, and cast them into the prison of hell, till they themselves have paid the uttermost farthing? Far be it from the judge of all the earth to do so, who will do right *!"

Whether *Christ has paid the debt for all men, or for some men*;—if he hath *actually paid it*—I shall readily agree with the Remarker,—“That it cannot be just in GOD to arrest such persons, and cast them into the prison of hell, till they themselves have paid the uttermost farthing.”

What

* Remarks, pages 6, 7.

What then, is the proper debt? The ten thousand talents, which we have not wherewith to pay? What do we deserve on account of our sins? The scriptural answer is—*The soul that sinneth, it shall die! The wages of sin is death!*

I believe, I may take it for granted, that the Remarker will admit—that by dying, and death, something more than the death of the body is meant;—even that eternal death and destruction which awaits wicked men, who die in their sins! The question will then be, (agreeable to the Remarker's idea of Christ's payment of the proper debt) whether, from these premises, it doth not follow; that Christ must have gone to hell for us?—suffered there, what we should have suffered?—and lain there, under those sufferings, as long as we should have done?

But I also object to his notion of—*Christ's paying the proper debt*, as it goes
to

to overturn the idea of being saved by Grace:—and as it destroys the idea of moral obligation. Ideas—these, confirmed by reason, scripture, and experience. The Remarker says:—“ If one man pay another man’s debts, would it be just in the creditor to exact, require, and receive payment again, at the hands of the debtor?”

I answer—No. In such a case, the Creditor hath no claims upon the Debtor:—The Debtor owes him nothing! To illucidate my meaning——The discharged debtor meets his creditor, who thus accosts him:—“Sir, I forgive you the debt you owed me.” “ You forgive me! pray, did not Mr: —— pay you my debt? and take up my bond? and is not this your discharge?” “ Yes, yes, he did; I say, I forgive you.”—“ Thank you for nothing! you say, you are paid; and I have your discharge in my pocket; and now you talk of forgiving!—I do not understand you: but
remember,

remember, you have been paid *the very uttermost farthing!* and have therefore no claims whatsoever upon me.

Thus we see Antinomianism comes in with a full tide. The *pretended Calvinists*, when it serves their purpose, can make an outcry against Antinomianism, while their principles support it with an high hand. Hence it appears, that being freely forgiven, and moral obligations to obedience, are, by these principles, overturned from the very foundations. And hence also, I have my hopes—That the Remarker and his Brethren, the *pretended Calvinists*, will re-examine their principles, before they make any more grievous complaints of being injured, when their principles are charged, *with countenancing all manner of wickedness!*"

But the Remarker says,—“ The universal Scheme, reflects on the power of God, as if he was not able to carry his designs

designs into execution: Whereas, the
 LORD's hand is not shortened, that it
 cannot save. But according to this
 Scheme, it seems as if it was: for, if
 Christ has redeemed all men, and all
 men are not saved; it *must* either be
 from want of *will* in GOD to save them,
 or from want of power:—Not from
 want of will;—for, according to this
 Scheme, it seems the will of GOD that
 every individual man should be saved.
 It *must* therefore be for want of power:
 and then, GOD is not Omnipotent!—
 Should it be said—That some men
 not being saved, is owing to evil dispo-
 sitions in them—obstructing the kind
 intentions and designs of GOD towards
 them—to the perverseness of their wills
 and the strength of their unbelief—
 But is man mightier than his Maker?—
 Are the kind influences of GOD, and
 his intentions, to be obstructed and made
 ineffectual by the corrupt disposition
 of men?—Is not he able to work in
 them, both to will and to do of his
 good

good pleasure?—Cannot he remove the perverseness of their wills, and the hardness of their hearts?—And cannot he, by his power, take away their unbelief, and give them faith in a living Redeemer?—Far be it from us to think otherwise of him, with whom nothing is too hard, nor any thing impossible."

It is granted—"That nothing is too hard for God, nor any thing impossible with him," that is *consonant* to his nature: nothing that is *not contrary* to that *moral liberty* with which he has endowed his rational creatures. When, therefore, I read in my Bible,—“That God is not a man that he should lie, nor the Son of man that he should repent *.” I conclude—That *God cannot lie, nor deceive*:—that would be to act contrary to his nature and character!—In like manner, when I read—“That God called, and they refused: that he stretched out his hand, and no man regarded.

* Numb. xxiii.—19.

garded *." That Stephen said to their descendants,—“ Ye stiff-necked, and hard-hearted; as your fathers did, so do ye: *resist the Holy Ghost*†.” And also, when it is said of our Saviour, “ That *he did not* do many mighty works in his own city, because of their unbelief†.” I say, when I read such passages, I conclude, that it may be said in a sound sense,—That GOD cannot do things that are contrary to his own Nature, or their Free Agency;—in a matter wherein their Salvation, or Destruction is concerned. And pray, what is this, but only saying:—That GOD cannot cease to be, and act like himself? Doth this bring any dishonour to the Most High?—And now let us turn the tables, and see how the Remarker will defend himself.

If GOD redeemed all the Israelites out of Ægypt, and promised them the possession

P

session

* Prov. i.—24. † Acts vii.—51.

† Matt. xiii.—58.

session of Canaan, and never put them in possession of it;—" It must be either from want of will in GOD to put them in possession, or from want of power. Not from want of will:—for, according to the Bible, it not only *seems* to be—but really was the will of GOD, that every individual Israelite should possess Canaan. Not for want of power:—that would be, to deny his Omnipotence!" It is rather ominous—that all the Remarker's strong reasons should turn tale, and prove the very reverse they were intended to prove!

I am, Sir,

Your's, &c.

Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 1788.

J. HAMPSON.

LETTER

LETTER X.

S I R,

“ **T**HE universal Scheme, (says the
“ Remarker) highly reflects on the
“ *Immutability of God*, respecting his
“ Love, and his Counsel. GOD, in
“ Scripture, says—*I am the Lord, I*
“ *change not; therefore, ye sons of*
“ *Jacob, are not consumed*. But, ac-
“ cording to this Scheme, it should ra-
“ ther be—I am the Lord,—yet I do
“ change:—therefore, ye sons of men,
“ *are consumed*. Some of them at least,
“ are consumed, and perish eternally,
P 2 “ though

“ redeemed by the blood of the Son of
 “ God ! For the Love of God, with res-
 “ pect to those that perish eternally, must
 “ be changeable ; One while he loves
 “ them so that he wills their Salvation ;
 “ at another time, his Love is turned
 “ into hatred against them ; and he re-
 “ solves to stir up his wrath, and punish
 “ them to the uttermost. But he is of
 “ one mind,—and who can turn him ?
 “ And what his soul desireth, that he
 “ doth. And yet, according to the Ar-
 “ minian tenets, he is sometimes in one
 “ mind, and sometimes in another.—
 “ Sometimes his mind is to save men,
 “ and at another time his mind is to
 “ damn them ! But let not this be said
 “ of him *with whom there is no varia-*
 “ *bleness, nor shadow of turning* *.”

As I cannot discern any real difference
 between this, and the Remarkers's *First*
 Argument, I might safely let it pass,
 without taking any notice of it :—but
 that

* Remarks, page 8.

that he may have no reason to complain for want of good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over;—I refer him to the case of Ninevah, for an answer.

“ GOD bid Jonah—*Go to Ninevah,*
 “ *and preach to it* (says he) *the preach-*
 “ *ing that I bid thee.* He went, and
 “ cried:—Yet forty days, and Ninevah
 “ shall be overthrown! They repented
 “ at the preaching of Jonah; and GOD
 “ repented of his threatening, and spared
 “ them. Query whether, or no, this is
 “ consistent with his Immutability? If
 “ he say, yes; he absolves the Arminians:
 “ If no; then he arraigns the Inspira-
 “ tion of the Holy Scriptures!

But the Remarker comes on once more, and arraigns the universal Scheme, as disappointing GOD of his chief End, and robbing him of his Glory:—*God's ultimate end, in the Redemption of men, is his own glory: The Glory of his rich*
 Mercy

Mercy and Grace; and of his Righteousness, Truth, and Faithfulness. But if Men, any of those that are redeemed by Christ, are not saved; so far God looses his End, and is deprived of his Glory.*

Was GOD disappointed of his end, and robbed of his glory by the fall of angels and men?—By the disobedience and death of Israelites in the Wilderness?—and, finally, by the reformation of the Ninevites? A plain determinate answer to these queries, will lay a foundation for a plain determinate answer to this objection; as well, as we have seen it hath done, to all the rest.

Hence, we conclude—That Arminianism is friendly to the Divine Perfections;—and that all the Arguments adduced in the Free Thoughts, to prove universal Redemption; and to overturn absolute Reprobation, stand in full force, unless we should be so complaisant as to give

* Remarks, page 9.

give him the Question, because he has the effrontry to beg it! In a word:

That pretended Calvinism is a source of errors on the article of Christian morality; which, under shew of attributing all to grace, destroys the freedom of human actions, reduces man to a meer machine, and runs into the spring whence it first proceeded,—the Stoical Fatalism! And we call it pretended Calvinism, because it was not the system of that great man; nor is it the system of the Holy Scripture, which never so states the doctrine of Fall as to exculpate sinners, nor ever so speaks of divine Influence as to annihilate Moral Agency!

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

in the Gospel,

*Tunbridge-Wells,
Feb. 28, 1788,*

J. Hampson.

give him the Question, because he has
the authority to begin. In a word:

That pretended Christianity is a source
of error on the article of Christian liberty;
which, under form of establishing
all to grace, destroys the freedom of human
actions, reduces man to a mere machine,
and turns into the living, intelligent, free
proceeding—the stupid idolatry! And
you call it pretended Christianity, because
it was not the ~~first~~ that great man;
nor is it the ~~first~~ that great man;
which never so ~~far~~ from the line of fall
as to exculpate sinners, nor even to speak
of divine influence as to exculpate sinners.
Allegory!

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

in the Gospel

J. Hampton

Transcribed by
A. S. 1788.

